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'68 given here. They are not exempt from inconsistency, they are intertwined with each other. The only point at which all these ideologies concur is that they one and all are the expression of an intense reaction against colonialism—and obviously against the policy of assimilation—and serve as a basis for a growing nationalism.

The reaction against assimilation took the form of a denial of the basic assertion that Africans were a people without history or culture and that they were fortunate to have been taken under the guiding wing of France. The French administrator who declared 'We are the modern Romans. We have civilised these people, and built them roads', was the prime object of their attack. To counter 668 this patronising French attitude Senegalese intellectuals 814 looked into their past to discover an African civilisation which they could show had also played its part in the development of man. They rejected the common nineteenth-century European interpretation of African history which showed a people engaged in interminable internecine and debilitating warfare, who had not discovered the wheel, who lived under appalling conditions of disease and climate, and they substituted their own interpretation of Africa, which was closer to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's picture of the Noble Savage untainted by the evils of modern society. In a few cases they took the somewhat defeatist attitude of Césaire, shouting 'Hurrah for those who invented nothing'. But the more typical reinterpretation, was that of Cheikh Anta Diop, who gives an extreme idealisation of African history. His works—*L'Afrique noire pré-coloniale*, *Nations nègres et cultures* and *L'unité culturelle de l'Afrique noire*—have come under heavy criticism from European scholars. But a critical evaluation is not intended here. What is important is that a Senegalese, of undoubted scholastic attainment, had reinterpreted the history not only of his country but of the continent as a whole, so that it could be put on equal terms with that of Europe. Thus he asserts in *Apports et perspectives culturels de l'Afrique* (*Présence Africaine*) that

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Pharaonic Egypt was a Negro civilisation. Since the West acknowledges its debt to Egyptian civilisation, it was also indebted to Negro peoples for its present cultural attainments. '. . . the Egyptian achievement was essentially a Negro one and . . . all Africans without exception can draw from it the same moral benefits that the West does with regard to Graeco-Latin civilisation.' Elsewhere he asserts in *Nations nègres et culture* (1955), 'Intellectuals should study the past not merely for pleasure but to learn lessons from it.' A notable strand in Diop's return to the past is not merely to assert the traditional dignity of the Senegalese, but of all Africans, even though his work shows inevitably a pro-Senegalese bias when he states that the ancient Egyptians spoke a language that was basically Wolof.

The second major string in the bow of reaction to assimilation was the assertion of the original unity of Africans, a unity that had only been broken up by the colonialists. Diop's *L'unité culturelle de l'Afrique noire* is an attempt to prove the fundamental unity of black Africa, for obviously a united Africa would represent a more potent cultural force, and consequently political force, in the face of Europe than one divided into a host of petty states and tribes. Pan-Africanism, on the cultural level, was largely the work of such writers as Diop and Senghor. Its political aspects, not surprisingly, were to be taken up by the more politically conscious English-speaking Africans like Nnamdi Azikiwe and Kwame Nkrumah.

But the most important thesis of all was that of the African personality. And for this Senghor, now President of the Republic of Senegal, was largely responsible. It is all very well for a people to prove that they have a history when others say they have not. But the most important thing, as far as Senghor and other Senegalese intellectuals saw it, was to prove the uniqueness of the African contribution not only to the past but to the present. Thus Senghor asserted that the African had a certain outlook on life that others had not. The essence of the African

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most irreducible of paradoxes. Colonisation is always measured in terms of gain for the coloniser.

Between colonialist and colonial there is room only for forced labour, intimidation, pressure, police, theft, rape, obligatory farming, scorn, mistrust, arrogance, self-conceit, deceit, suppressed élites and debased masses.

No human relationship but a relationship based on domination and submission which transform the coloniser into a pawn, an adjutant, a warder, a flogger and the native into an instrument of production.

The resentment of assimilation is the same. But the interpretation is a Marxist one and the remedies subsequently offered by Majhemout Diop were non-African in origin. His *Contribution to the Study of Political Problems in Black Africa* is almost entirely Marxist in inspiration and the source matter, abundantly evident from the footnotes, is the work of Stalin, Lenin, Engels and Marx, none of whom had any first-hand knowledge of economic conditions in Africa. Another Senegalese, of very distinguished academic reputation, who uses Marxist techniques in his studies of African problems, is Ly Abdoulaye, an economic historian who nevertheless is much more inclined to take into account African circumstances in the application of Marxist theories. Indeed Ly is at great pains to avoid Marxist terminology even when employing Marxist ideas. There are in fact few Senegalese intellectuals who are not in some sense Marxist socialists. But more especially they are devotees of what they call African socialism.

In the search for identity that followed the application of assimilationist policy, the first tendency was to rehabilitate African culture. Naturally political rehabilitation was one of the most important goals for politicians like Senghor. But when he broke with the *S.F.I.O.* in 1948, he gave as one of his reasons that French socialism, like Communism, after all, 'did not understand our problems, and wanted to solve them with a plan devised by and for Europe'. His proposed alternative of 'African socialism' was at the time

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caste from his own tribe. The extent to which caste matters is brought out by the case of a young Catholic girl from a devout family who, rather than marry a fellow Catholic out of caste, in the end became the polygamous wife of a Muslim of the same caste. Within any ethnic group in Senegal marriage out of caste is extremely rare.

The caste system is not vicious in any real sense. For the privileges of a high caste entail many obligations. Thus a noble Wolof family will be obliged to feed and pay frequent sums of money to its family griots (minstrels, praise-singers and family historians) and if they fail to do this the griot is able to shame them publicly as a poor or mean family, something a Wolof would avoid at all costs. Likewise the artisan castes have a monopoly in their respective trades, since it would be impossible for a noble or free man to undertake the work of a jeweller or smith. Nevertheless in Senegalese society the term 'bijoutier' or 'tisserand' has slight contempt attached to it. The only caste to suffer socially in any way is of course that designated slave, because of the implications of such a status. In social investigations amongst the factory workers of Dakar, M. André Hauser found very few indeed who would admit to being of slave caste.

At present it is certainly a disadvantage to belong to any of the inferior castes, and though one hears of a few cases of open clashes between castes, in the present state of affairs it is certain that a number of young men resent this classification of people into superior and inferior groups and it is very much less important to them than to the older generation.

Early in 1961 *Agence Presse Sénégalaise* reported 'bloody clashes between griots and non-griots at Diack'. These ended with several dead and a number of wounded and started as a result of the refusal of non-griots to accept the burial of griots in their burial ground. The Minister of the Interior himself went to settle the dispute and gathered the whole population to tell them that his Government gave